

Education at the forefront of March 15 discussion

by Allison Reineck - Thursday, March 10, 2011

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/9945/education-at-the-forefront-of-march-15-discussion/>

A timely discussion will take place at the upcoming American Democracy Project event, entitled “The Future of UW: Roundtable on Higher Education in Wisconsin,” as panelists, the UW Oshkosh community and general public examine higher education in Wisconsin and the U.S.

All members of the community, as well as alumni, are invited to attend the event at 7 p.m. in Reeve Memorial Union ballroom on March 15. The panelists will discuss the future of higher education in Wisconsin, higher education in the 21st century, affordability and finance of higher education, the role of liberal arts, and the relationship between higher education and economic development.

David Ward, former provost of UW Oshkosh and chancellor in the UW System; John Koker, dean of the College of Letters and Science; Josh Garrison, faculty member in the College of Education and Human Services; and Jolie Lizotte, student representative from the System United Council student governance group, will be part of the ADP Roundtable panel. Moderating the discussion will be Associate History Professor Stephen Kercher.

“Panelists were selected for their expertise and the experience and perspective they bring to the discussion,” said Carleen Vande Zande, assistant vice chancellor of curricular affairs and student academic achievement at UW Oshkosh. “Dr. Ward served in several positions in the UW system and has expertise in the area of economics while Dean Koker is a strong advocate for the liberal arts and sciences and the role these courses play in an undergraduate’s preparation for future employment.”

Vande Zande said Garrison is an expert in the history of education and serves on the University’s liberal education reform team. Lizotte is an active student who’s heavily involved in student governance.

Audience members, including those from neighboring higher education communities, will be asked to comment and ask questions during the event.

David Siemers, chair of ADP and professor of political science, said this ADP Roundtable offers an opportunity to hear people’s voices about education—broadening the ADP’s appeal to everyone.

“There are a lot of important meetings that take place on campus, but this speaks directly to what is going on and what we do,” said Siemers. “Because of current events, I do expect a large turnout.”

Knowing the proposed budget would be announced to the public in February or March, ADP planned the event months ago. But planners had no idea of the magnitude of the cuts the university system now faces or that the system would be proposed to be restructured. They also could not have foreseen the public’s response toward state budget cuts in education and the public sector.

“Obviously there a lot of thoughts, questions and opinions about what is currently going on with the

proposed budget cuts and this forum will give the opportunity to have discussion about that, but there are so many other topics that deserve our attention, like what a higher education is ultimately for,” Siemers said. “Affordability is something we are all interested in too.”

Both Vande Zande and Siemers explained that the upcoming Roundtable is just one of many programs ADP sponsors to provide opportunities for civic engagement on current events important to both the University and regional community.

“I don’t know why people wouldn’t show up to this event. We are looking at the biggest changes in the UW System in the past 40 years,” Siemers said. “To gain an understanding of what’s happening with the UW System, including the probability of it splitting apart, financial pressures and affordability. We need to attend these events because this is something that involves everyone.

“Politics affects all of us and everything around us. We have to pay attention because it so profoundly affects our world—from the most local matter to the largest issues out there.”

For more information about American Democracy Project events, visit www.uwosh.edu/adp.